

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A virtual shopper device for presenting to a user an image display of the user wearing an item comprising:
 - an image display;
 - a sensor for sensing signals from a tracking memory associated with the item;
 - a memory device containing personal profile information for the user including at least one dataset composed of user fit data and user image data;
 - a user input device for at least activating a function to present an image of the user wearing the item; and
 - a controller adapted to retrieve item fit data and item image data for the item from a database, to generate a display image simulating the appearance of the item as worn by the user, said image data being generated based upon the item fit data, the item image data, the user fit data and the user image data, and to cause the image display to present the display image.
2. The virtual shopper device of claim 1, wherein the database is separate from the virtual shopper device and wherein the virtual shopper device further comprises a communication module for establishing communication with the database.
3. The virtual shopper device of claim 1, wherein the personal profile information further includes user personal preference information for preferred and non-preferred items.
4. The virtual shopper device of claim 1, wherein the personal profile information further includes personal preference information identifying at least one of a preferred item color, style, fit, and size.

5. The virtual shopper device of claim 1, wherein the controller permits the user to select options for the generated image based upon related item options stored in the database, obtains item option data for the selected item option from the database and generates a revised display image based upon the obtained item option data, the user fit data, and the user image data, and displays the revised display image.

6. The virtual shopper device of claim 5, wherein the controller further determines from the database, a location of an item having the selected item option.

7. The virtual shopper device of claim 1, wherein the personal profile information includes at least one dataset for an additional user which contains user fit data and user image data for the additional user, and wherein the controller permits the user to select the additional user dataset and enables generation and display of a display image of the item and the additional user based upon item fit data and item image data for the additional user.

8. The virtual shopper device of claim 1, further comprising a communication module to establish wired communication with the database for the retrieval of item fit data and item image data.

9. The virtual shopper device of claim 1, wherein the memory device further includes a slot for receiving a removable memory having the database stored thereon and wherein the controller is adapted to download item fit data and item image data from the database on the removable memory.

10. The virtual shopper device of claim 1, wherein, when the item having at least one of user selected item fit data, item image data, and item option data is unavailable at a particular retail establishment, the user input device and controller are adapted to enable the user to create an order for the user

selected item, transmit the order to the database and receive confirmation of receipt of the order.

11. The virtual shopper device of claim 1, wherein the user input device comprises at least one dedicated function key, at least one soft key, a PDA-like keyboard or a stylus pad.

12. The virtual shopper device of claim 1, wherein the user input device and controller cooperate to permit the user to select at least one of scene options and accessory options for forming a revised display image and form a revised display image reflecting the selected options.

13. The virtual shopper device of claim 1, wherein the controller stores data for selected generated images in the memory device to allow each generated image to be presented later.

14. The virtual shopper device of claim 1, wherein the personal profile information further includes item fit data and item image data for a plurality of previously displayed generated images and a plurality of previously purchased items and wherein the user input device and the controller cooperate to permit the user to view a generated image of a previously purchased item on the display.

15. The virtual shopper device of claim 1, wherein the user input device is adapted to receive a change in perspective input action and the controller generates an image that simulates the appearance of the user and item as viewed from different perspectives.

16. The virtual shopper device of claim 1, wherein the controller prevents the database from obtaining image data personal fit data from the memory device.

17. The virtual shopper device of claim 1, wherein the controller accompanies each request for item fit data and item image data with a request for additional item fit data and item image data said additional request requesting item information that does not correspond to an item of interest to the user.

18. An electronic memory accessory comprising:
a memory having personal profile information for a user including at least one dataset composed of user fit data and user image data the memory further has executable instructions for causing a programmable device to retrieve item fit data and item image data for an item and to generate a display image simulating the appearance of the item as worn by the user; said display image being generated based upon the item fit data, the item image data, the user fit data and the user image data;

a memory interface adapted to receive requests from the programmable device for the at least one dataset stored in the memory and wherein the memory interface allows data to be read from the at least one dataset only where the memory interface receives a signal indicating that programmable device is executing the executable instructions and wherein the executable instructions are adapted to prevent retention of the received data by the programmable device after the received data has been used by the executable instructions to generate an image.

19. The electronic memory of claim 18, further comprising a source of information for requesting and retrieving from item fit data and item image data from a remote database.

20. The electronic memory accessory of claim 18, wherein the source of information comprises a reader device for reading a tracking memory.

21. The electronic memory accessory of claim 18, wherein the executable instructions comprise instructions for at least one of a personal digital assistant, personal computer, handheld computer, kiosk, or point of sale terminal.

22. An image processing device comprising:
a memory having personal profile information for a user including at least one dataset composed of user fit data and user image data;
a communication module adapted to receive item fit data, item image data, and an image signal; and
a signal processor adapted to process the received image signal to generate a display image signal based upon the user fit data, the user image data, the item fit data and the item image data;
wherein the generated display image signal is transmitted by the communication module.

23. The image processing device of claim 22, further comprising a source of information for requesting and retrieving item fit data and item image data from a database and wherein the memory is further adapted to store the information for requesting and receiving.

24. The image processing device of claim 23, wherein the source for information item fit data and item image data comprises a reader device for reading a tracking memory.

25. The image processing device after of claim 22, wherein the dataset includes at least one of information for assembling the image information of the item and information for displaying the generated display image.

26. The image processing device of claim 22, wherein the personal profile information further includes user personal preference information

for preferred and non-preferred accessories, styles, sizes, finishes and colors of items.

27. The image processing device of claim 22, wherein the personal profile information includes at least one dataset for an additional user which contains user fit data and user image data for the additional user, and wherein the signal processor is adapted to receive a signal selecting one of the user datasets for use in generating the display image.

28. The image processing device of claim 22 wherein the memory has at least one of:
information to permit the user to select changes to the generated display image based upon item option data provided by the database,
information for retrieving item option image data of the changes selected from the database; and
information for generating a revised display based upon the item option data with the image data of the user from the personal profile information, stored therein.

29. The image processing device of claim 22 wherein the memory further has information for using a wireless signal to communicate using a communication network connected to the database stored therein and, wherein the information for requesting and retrieving from database includes information for wirelessly retrieving information from the database using the signal.

30. A shopping system comprising:
a database including information for at least one item which includes at least one of available size, style, color and fit information of the at least one item and corresponding image data for the at least one item;
a programmable device having a communication circuit, a controller, an image display, and an input device; and

a data storage device containing a communication module and downloadable information, the downloadable information comprising:
information for requesting and retrieving item image data and item fit data from the database; and
personal profile information for the user including at least one dataset composed of user image data and user fit data,
wherein the data storage device, allows the user to employ the programmable device to request and retrieve from the database item image data and item fit data, to generate a display image simulating the appearance of the item as worn by the user based upon the item image data, the item fit data, the user image data and the user fit data and to display the generated image on a display of the programmable device.

31. The shopping system of claim 30, further comprising a sensor for sensing a tracking memory associated with an item and obtaining data therefrom,

wherein the communication module of the personal computing device or the data storage device includes a device for establishing wireless communication with the database via a wireless network,

wherein the data storage device further includes information for use in sensing the tracking memory,

wherein the information for requesting and retrieving from a database includes information for wirelessly retrieving information from a database using a remote network, and

wherein, upon sensing a radio frequency or infrared signal, the information for requesting and retrieving allows the user to wirelessly request the garment information from the database.

32. A method for presenting an image of a user wearing an item comprising the steps of:

obtaining personal profile information which includes at least one dataset of user fit data and user image data,
sensing a tracking memory having information regarding the item;
retrieving fit data and image data for the item from a database using the information from the tracking memory;
generating a display image based upon the item fit data, item image data, user fit data, and user image data; and
presenting the display image
wherein the personal profile information is not provided to the database.

33. The method of claim 32, further comprising the steps of sensing more than one tracking memory with each tracking memory associated with an item, obtaining fit data for each item, and identifying at least one item of interest by detecting items having fit data that correspond to user fit data.

34. The method of claim 32, wherein the personal profile information further comprises at least one of style, color, and fit information and further comprising the steps of sensing more than one tracking memory each associated with an item, obtaining at least one of style, color, and fit data for each item, identifying at least one item of interest by detecting items having at least one of style color and fit data that correspond to at least one of the style, color and fit data in the personal profile.

35. The method of claim 32, further comprising the steps of determining options available for the item of interest, displaying information to a user indicating that such options are available, and forming a display image based upon such options.

36. The method of claim 35, further comprising the step of determining the nearest retail location having the item of interest available for purchase.